impact on the revenue generation of the Department. This is likely to aggravate with the opening of domestic long distance network to private operators. Government has been making efforts to achieve higher annual targets than what has been envisaged in the Ninth Plan so that the overall achievement of Government during Ninth Plan is more than 185 lakh telephones which is the target set for Government in the Ninth Plan and likely to reach 220 lakh telephones.

NCR Region including Delhi provided 1.89 lakh telephone connections in 1998-99. During the current year NCR Region including Delhi so far provided more than 1.75 lakh telephone connections and is likely to provide more than 2 lakh lines.

Benefits to Bharti Telecom under Migration package

1240. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the report "IDFC gives Bharti Rs. 200 cr. to buy Telecom companies" published in 'Business Standard' on 1st February, 2000;

(b) whether it is a fact that Bharti is trying to buy sick companies which were sought to be bailed out by Government through the migration package in pursuance of 'public good' at the cost of 'public revenue' ;and

(c) if so, whether the same company Bharti was a beneficiary of the migration package as a metro cellular operator and to what extent deemed payment from Bharti was relinquished by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The licenses for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service are not transferable. However, the promoters/partners may transfer their equity subject to conditions of the license. While offering the Migration Package to cellular companies in respect of existing licenses, a condition has been imposed regarding lock-in period of five years on existing share-holdings. Since M/s. Skycell Communications (P) Limited, Licenses for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service in Chennai had completed five years lock-in period, M/s. Cromption Greaves were allowed to sell their equity (40.5%) in M/s. Skycell Communications (P) Limited to M/s. Bharti Televentures Limited. In case of M/s. JT Mobile,

5 years lock-in period has not been completed, no existing shareholder has been allowed to sell their stake to M/s. Bharti post migration.

(c) M/s. Bharti Cellular Limited, who have a Cellular License in Delhi Metro city, have been permitted to migrate from the license fee regime as envisaged in the existing license to a revenue sharing regime under New Telecom Policy-1999 with effect from 1.8.1999. However, all license fee dues till 31.7.1999 is to be paid by the company and no license fee amount due upto this cut-off date has been waived.

Opening of Sub-post Offices in Farukhabad, U.P.

†1241. PROF. RAM BAKHSH SINGH VARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of sub-post offices functioning in the District Farukhabad, Uttar Pradesh as on September, 1999;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a shortage of sub-post offices in the above district;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the criteria laid down by Government for the opening of sub-post offices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) 35 Sub-Post Offices are functioning in the District Farukhabad, Uttar Pradesh as on September, 1999.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Nil in view of (b) above.

(d) The norms for opening of Sub-Post Offices are given in Statement.

Statement

CRITERIA FOR UPGRADING/OPENING DEPARTMENTAL SUB-POST OFFICES

(a) *In Rural Areas*

The minimum workload of the Extra Departmental Branch Post Office, proposed to be upgraded, should be five hours per day. The permissible limit of annual loss is Rs. 2400/- (Rupees Two Thousand Four Hundered) in Normal Rural areas and Rs. 4800/- (Rupees Four Thousand Eight Hundred) in Tribal and Hilly areas.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.